

rough tatter'd clothes great Vices do appeare: Robes, and Furr'd gownes hide all. Place sinnes with Gold, and the strong Lance of Iustice, hurtlesse breakes: Arme it in ragges, a Pigmyes straw do's pierce it. None do's offend, none, I say none, Ile able 'em; take that of me my Friend, who haue the power to scale th'accusers lips: Get thee glasse-eyes, and like a scurvy Politician, seeme to see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now, now. Pull off my Bootes: harder, harder, so.

Edg. O matter, and impertinency mixt, Reason in Madnesse.

Lear. If thou wilt weepe my Fortunes, take my eyes, I know thee well enough, thy name is Gloucester: Thou must be patient; we came crying hither: Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the Ayre We wawle, and cry. I will preach to thee: Marke.

Glon. Alacke, alacke the day.

Lear. When we are borne, we cry that we are come To this great stage of Fooles. This a good blocke: It were a delicate stratagem, to shoo A Troope of Horse with Felt: Ile put't in prooffe, And when I haue stolne vpon these Son in Lawes, Then kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Oh heere he is: lay hand vpon him, Sir, Your most deere Daughter.

Lear. No rescue? What, a Prisoner? I am euen The Naturall Foole of Fortune. Vse me well, You shall haue ranfome. Let me haue Surgeons, I am cut to th' Braines.

Gent. You shall haue any thing.

Lear. No Seconds? All my selfe?

Why, this would make a man, a man of Salt To vse his eyes for Garden water-pots. I wil die brauely, Like a smugge Bridegroom. What? I will be Iouiall: Come, come, I am a King, Masters, know you that?

Gent. You are a Royall one, and we obey you.

Lear. Then there's life in't. Come, and you get it, You shall get it by running: Sa, fa, fa, fa.

Exit.

Gent. A sight most pittifull in the meanest wretch, Past speaking of in a King. Thou hast a Daughter Who redeemes Nature from the generall curse Which twaine haue brought her to.

Edg. Haile gentle Sir.

Gent. Sir, speed you: what's your will?

Edg. Do you heare ought (Sir) of a Battell toward.

Gent. Most sure, and vulgar:

Every one heares that, which can distinguish sound.

Edg. But by your fauour:

How neere's the other Army?

Gent. Neere, and on speedy foot: the maine descry Stands on the houely thought.

Edg. I thanke you Sir, that's all.

Gent. Though that the Queen on special cause is here Her Army is mou'd on.

Exit.

Edg. I thanke you Sir.

Glon. You euer gentle Gods, take my breath from me, Let not my worser Spirit tempt me againe To dye before you please.

Edg. Well pray you Father.

Glon. Now good fir, what are you?

Edg. A most poore man, made tame to Fortunes blows Who, by the Art of knowne, and feeling sorowes, Am pregnant to good pittie. Giue me your hand, Ile leade you to some biding.

Glon. Heartie thanks:

The bountie, and the benizon of Heauen To boot, and boot.

Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim'd prize: most happie That eyelesse head of thine, was first fram'd flesh To raise my fortunes. Thou old, vnhappy Traitor, Breefely thy selfe remember: the Sword is out That must destroy thee.

Glon. Now let thy friendly hand Put strength enough too't.

Stew. Wherefore, bold Pezant, Dar'st thou support a publish'd Traitor? Hence, Least that th' infection of his fortune take Like hold on thee. Let go his arme.

Edg. Chill not let go Zir, Without further cation.

Stew. Let go Slaue, or thou dy'st.

Edg. Good Gentleman goe your gate, and let poore volke passe: and 'chud ha' bin zwaggerd out of my life, 'twould not ha' bin so long as 'tis, by a vortnight. Nay, come not neere th' old man: keepe out che vor'ys, or ice try whither your Costard, or my Ballow be the harder; chill be plaine with you.

Stew. Out Dunghill.

Edg. Chill picke your teeth Zir: come, no matter vor your foynes.

Stew. Slaue thou hast slaine me: Villain, take my purse; If euer thou wilt thrue, bury my bodie,

And giue the Letters which thou find'st about me,

To Edmund Earle of Gloucester: seeke him out

Vpon the English party. Oh vntimely death, death.

Edg. I know thee well. A seruiceable Villaine,

As durtous to the vices of thy Mistis,

As badnesse would desire.

Glon. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you downe Father: rest you,

Let's see these Pockets; the Letters that he speakes of

May be my Friends: hee's dead; I am onely sorry

He had no other Deathman. Let vs see:

Leaue gentle waxe, and manners: blame vs not

To know our enemies mindes, we rip their hearts,

Their Papers is more lawfull.

Reads the Letter.

I Et our reciprocall vowes be remembered. You haue manie opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offer'd. There is nothing done. If hee returne the Conqueror, then am I the Prisoner, and his bed my Gaole, from the loathed warmth whereof, deliuer me, and supply the place for your Labour.

Your (Wife, so I would say) affectionate Seruant. Gonerill.

Oh indistinguish'd space of Womans will, A plot vpon her vertuous Husbands life, And the exchange my Brother: heere, in the sands Thee Ile rake vp, the poste vnfanctified Of murderous Letchers: and in the mature time, With this vngracious paper strike the sight Of the death-practis'd Duke: for him 'tis well, That of thy death, and businesse, I can tell.

Glon. The King is mad:

How stiffe is my vnde feeling

That I stand vp, and haue ingenious feeling

Of my huge Sorowes? Better I were distract,

So should my thoughts be seuer'd from my griefes,

Drum afarre off.

And woes, by wrong imaginations loofe

The

The knowledge of themselves.

Edg. Giue me your hand:

Farre off methinkes I heare the beaten Drumme.

Come Father, Ile bestow you with a Friend.

Exeunt.

Scena Septima.

Enter Cordelia, Kent, and Gentleman.

Cor. O thou good Kent,

How shall I liue and worke

To match thy goodnesse?

My life will be too short,

And euery measure faile me.

Kent. To be acknowledg'd Madam is ore-paid,

All my reports go with the modest truth,

Not more, not clipp'd, but so.

Cor. Be better suited,

These weedes are memories of those worser houres:

I prythee put them off.

Kent. Pardon deere Madam,

Yet to be knowne shortens my made intent,

My boone I make it, that you know me not,

Till time, and I, thinke meet.

Cor. Then be't so my good Lord:

How do's the King?

Gent. Madam sleeps still.

Cor. O you kind Gods!

Cure this great breach in his abused Nature,

Th'vntun'd and iarring senses, O winde vp,

Of this childe, changed Father.

Gent. So please your Maiesty,

That we may wake the King, he hath slept long?

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceede

I th' way of your owne will: is he array'd?

Enter Lear in a chaire carried by Seruants

Gent. I Madam: in the heauinesse of sleepe,

We put fresh garments on him.

Be by good Madam when we do awake him,

I doubt of his Temperance.

Cor. O my deere Father, restauration hang

Thy medicine on my lippes, and let this kisse

Repaire those violent harmes, that my two Sisters

Haue in thy Reuerence made.

Kent. Kind and deere Princeesse,

Cor. Had you not bin their Father, these white flakes

Did challenge pittie of them. Was this a face

To be oppos'd against the iarring windes?

Mine Enemies dogge, though he had bit me,

Should haue stood that night against my fire,

And was't thou faine (poore Father)

To houell thee with Swine and Rogues forlorne,

In short, and musty straw? Alacke, alacke,

'Tis wonder that thy life and wits, at once

Had not concluded all. He wakes, speake to him.

Gent. Madam do you, 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my Royall Lord?

How fares your Maiesty?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o'th' graue,

Thou art a Soule in blisse, but I am bound

Vpon a wheele of fire, that mine owne teares

Do scal'd, like molten Lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit I know, where did you dye?

Cor. Still, still, farre wide.

Gent. He's scarce awake,

Let him alone a while.

Lear. Where haue I bin?

Where am I? Faice day light?

I am mightily abus'd; I should eu'n dye with pittie

To see another thus. I know not what to say:

I will not sweare these are my hands: let's see,

I feele this pin pricke, would I were assur'd

Of my condition.

Cor. O looke vpon me Sir,

And hold your hand in benediction o're me,

You must not kneele.

Lear. Pray do not mocke me:

I am a very foolish fond old man,

Fourescore and vpward,

Not an houre more, nor lesse:

And to deale plainly,

I feare I am not in my perfect mind.

Me thinkes I should know you, and know this man,

Yet I am doubtfull: For I am mainly ignorant

What place this is: and all the skill I haue

Remembers not these garments: nor I know not

Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me,

For (as I am a man) I thinke this Lady

To be my childe Cordelia.

Cor. And so I am: I am.

Lear. Be your teares wet?

Yes faith: I pray weepenot,

If you haue poyson for me, I will drinke it:

I know you do not loue me, for your Sisters

Haue (as I do remember) done me wrong.

You haue some cause, they haue not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France?

Kent. In your owne kingdome Sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Gent. Be comforted good Madam, the great rage

You see is kill'd in him: desire him to go in,

Trouble him no more till further setting.

Cor. Wilt please your Highnesse walke?

Lear. You must beare with me:

Pray you now forget, and forgieue,

I am old and foolish.

Exeunt

Actus Quintus. Scena Prima.

Enter, with Drumme and Colours, Edmund, Regan, Gentlemen, and Soldiers.

Bas. Know of the Duke if his last purpose hold,

Or whether since he is aduis'd by ought

To change the course, he's full of alteration,

And selfe reproouing, bring his constant pleasure.

Reg. Our Sisters man is certainly miscarried.

Bas. 'Tis to be doubted Madam.

Reg. Now sweet Lord,

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You